

MEDIA RELEASE

Teachers Attend Global Sandwatch Workshop

The Trinidad and Tobago National Commission for UNESCO hosted its first Sandwatch workshop on June 9, 2022 in the South-Eastern Education District, training more than 30 teachers of primary and secondary schools and curriculum officers of the Ministry of Education on the global environmental programme “Sandwatch”. The Sandwatch series is an educational tool that links education to real-life issues such as climate change and teaches participants the importance of environmental education outside the classroom.

This environmental training workshop was very timely as it tackled head-on, two environmental issues negatively affecting Small Island Developing States (SIDS) like ours, namely coastal soil erosion and climate change. It is the first in a series to be hosted in each education district across the country, including the island of Tobago. It is part of the UNESCO initiative to re-establish Sandwatch in the Caribbean with Trinidad and Tobago being the pilot country in the Caribbean. Delegates from the UNESCO Cluster Office for the Caribbean, located in Jamaica, represented the region.

The level of technical and scientific environmental training that participants received will enable participants to not only develop skills to establish other Sandwatch activities but to also connect new schools into the existing Sandwatch network. With the rich environmental content participants also developed a deeper appreciation for our beaches, how critical they are to our eco-system and the need to protect them from the ravages of coastal soil erosion and climate change.

Sandwatch began in 1998 as a regional activity involving the Caribbean UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network. It has since grown into a global programme, actively implemented in more than 50 countries worldwide with the support of UNESCO, the Sandwatch Foundation, and several other partners. Sandwatch links classroom activities to real-life issues related to climate change, environment, sustainable development, cultural diversity, science and more. It links academic subjects across the curriculum from Mathematics and Natural Science to Social Studies and the Creative Arts. Most important of all, Sandwatch stimulates and encourages practitioners, young and old, to act by becoming involved in protecting their environment, and in understanding and influencing local government policy and action.

By 2025, UNESCO aims to integrate environmental education into the school curriculum.

Secretary General
Trinidad and Tobago National Commission for UNESCO
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